

# FIRE ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP CHARTER

## I. BACKGROUND

The Fire Environment Working Group - FEWG was proposed in July 2004 so an integrated programmatic approach can be achieved in activities that were formerly the responsibility of the NCDFR Fire Danger Working Group. This former Group was asked to provide guidance in Fire Danger, Weather, RAWS Network Management, Smoke Management, Fire Use, Effects, Behavior & Research. The Group also continues to develop an active association with the Southern High Resolution Modeling Consortium, Air Quality, the Region's Geographic Coordination Center Predictive Services Group, and the National Weather Service. The commonality of all these groups is that they are focused on some aspect of the "fire environment" by measuring, predicting and /or providing guidance for decisions made for natural resource management. It is the recommendation by the NCDFR Fire Danger Working Group to the NCDFR Management Team that the FDWG migrate into the FEWG.

## II. NAME

The name of the Group is the NCDFR - Fire Environment Working Group (FEWG) hereinafter referred to as the Working Group (WG).

## III. AUTHORITY

This WG whose predecessor was the NCDFR Fire Danger Working Group, is established pursuant to the authority of the NCDFR State Director / Forester, Deputy Director and the Management Team.

## IV. MISSION

The purpose of the WG is to provide the Division oversight, strategic direction and vision relating to measuring and predicting the wildland fire environment and to extend this activity to the Division's interagency cooperators or community through use of "**strategic partners**".

## V. GOALS

The WG's goals are:

- To ensure the capability to monitor environmental conditions concerning wildland fire or prescribed fire as well as those aspects pertaining to the protection of NC's forests.
- To ensure the organizational structure exists to feature emerging technologies that further our understanding of the wildland fire environment
- To provide for the archiving of environmental information for GEODATABASE applications
  - ◆ Fire Weather
  - ◆ Smoke Management from prescribed or wildfires
  - ◆ Fire Use
  - ◆ Fire Effects
  - ◆ Fire Danger

◆ WUI

- To ensure the wildland fire fighting agencies and the National Weather Service have the capability to predict the future characteristics of the wildland fire environment
- To provide an interagency forum to collect, address, and make recommendations on application, training, and enhancements to the models and systems of the wildland fire environment
- To actively solicit information to ensure agency and public needs are assessed and prioritized
- To identify and implement products that meet agency and public needs
- To ensure that the agency and public can effectively use the products developed
- To ensure interdisciplinary strategy coordination and collaboration within NCDFR and with its cooperators through strategic partners
- To provide a forum for input into research priorities
- To request and coordinate Division funding and in-kind contributions to wildland fire environment research initiatives

## VI. ORGANIZATION

The WG is under the direction of the State Director and the NCDFR Management Team with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group Fire Environment Working Team serving as the mentor.

The WG is composed of NCDFR members, strategic partners, and support personnel.

WG leadership will consist of a four person executive committee including a chair and vice chair elected by the District Coordinators (DC). WG leadership should be re-evaluated every two years by the DC. The FEWG Chair will also serve as the WG's Liaison to the NCDFR's Management Team concerning the WG's activities.

Standing committees or task groups can be established and operate under the direction of the WG. They can be weather, behavior, fire danger, smoke management, training, fire effects, use and research. Each standing committee or task group is be represented by a leader. If needed, an approved charter and operating plan under the WG will be prepared. The Task Group or Committee will have a clearly defined mission & objectives.

## VII. MEMBERSHIP

The membership shall be comprised of:

- 1-NCDFR Statewide Manager
- 3-NCDFR Regional Managers
- 13-NCDFR District Managers
- 1-NCDFR Fire Staff – as placed by the Fire Chief
- 1-NCDFR Radio Tech Specialist - Fire Staff (as needed)
- Other NCDFR Personnel who express desire & interest

The WG's strategic partners are:

- US Forest Service Asheville Dispatch
- GACC Predictive Services
- Southern High Resolution Modeling Consortium
- US Fish Wildlife Service
- National Weather Service

State Climate Office  
NC Division of Air Quality  
NC Wildlife Resource Commission  
NC Parks & Recreation  
Dept. of Defense – Ft. Bragg, Sunny Point Military Terminal, Camp Lejuene,  
Dare Bomb Range  
Nature Conservancy  
Duke University  
NC State University

Representatives and alternates serving as partners will be selected by the entity they represent and will serve for a minimum of 2 years. The WG requires continuity in representation.

The WG's support organization will consist of:  
Executive Secretary

## VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Committee (Chair and Vice-Chair)

- Drafts program of work and budget proposals
- Sets agenda for regularly scheduled meetings in conjunction
- Schedules special meetings as needed
- Makes decisions on behalf of the Group between Group meetings as needed

Chair

- Submits a 3 year strategic plan to NCDFR Management Team July 1<sup>st</sup>
- Submits an annual strategic plan update by December 1 each year
- Submits annual accomplishment report by January 1<sup>st</sup> each year
- Serves as the WG's spokesperson as needed
- Accountable for achieving meeting objectives in conjunction
- Assigns work for special projects or assignments
- Selects ad hoc subject matter experts to assist in issue resolution
- Prepares and signs correspondence approved by the members direct to the field or when necessary submit to the Management Team for review, approval and implementation
- Solicits replacement WG members as vacancies occur

Vice Chair

- Responsible for tracking on going projects
- Draft annual accomplishment report by June 15<sup>th</sup>
- Provides follow up on project assignments to members and/or standing committees to ensure timely completion
- Acts in the capacity of the chair in the absence of the chair

Executive Secretary

- Accountable for documenting meeting proceedings and decisions in accordance with the WG & the NCDFR Management Team standards and guidelines
- Maintains a permanent file of the group activity

- Distributes WG documents to WG members and NCDFR Webmaster

#### Members

- Solicit issues and agenda items from District Field personnel, their constituents, for inclusion in the WG's meeting agenda
- Attend and engage in all regularly scheduled meetings
  - In the rare occasion that a member cannot attend, an alternate must be identified who will fully represent the absent WG member
- Provide background information relating to agenda items to the executive secretary three weeks prior to the scheduled meeting
- Accept and complete work assigned by the chair
- Disseminate information to constituents and agencies

#### Strategic Partners

- Engage in a cooperative relationship with the WG
- Attend and engage in all regularly scheduled meetings
  - In the rare occasion that a strategic partner cannot attend, an alternate must be identified who will fully represent the absent strategic partner

#### Subject Matter Experts

- Provide expertise from their subject matter areas to the WG as requested

### IX. MEETINGS AND REPORTS

A. Meetings: At least three (3) meetings will be held annually. One of the three meetings will be designated to prepare annual operational plans and to identify areas of investigation. Meetings will be scheduled and agendas provided in advance to members of the WG. Meeting locations and times will be scheduled one year in advance. Seven Districts will normally constitute a quorum.

B. Reports: Special findings and reports will be appropriately published after being approved by the WG and endorsed by the NCDFR Management Team. Work plans will be submitted to the NCDFR Management Team annually. Meeting schedules, financial considerations, recommended areas of investigation, work schedules, and work area descriptions will be submitted with the work plan.

### X. APPROVAL

This Charter is effective the date of approval and signing by the NCDFR State Director. The Charter may be revised upon recommendation of a majority of the WG's members with the concurrence of the signatory parties.

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State Director

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Date